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Press Release

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OES DIRECTOR URGES SAN LUIS OBISPO, SANTA BARBARA COUNTY RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS TO REPORT "MAJOR" DAMAGE TO LOCAL OFFICIALS

SACRAMENTO – The Director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), Dallas Jones, today urged San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara County residents and business owners to report "major" damages to their local offices of emergency services.

"We are working quickly with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Small Business Administration, as well as with local governments in both counties, to visit and document 'major' damage at residential structures, commercial buildings and public facilities," said

Jones. "The sooner we can ascertain the extent of major damage, the sooner residents and business owners who suffered that damage can begin the recovery process."

Accurate damage assessment data is essential when determining whether federal disaster assistance can be made available. Additionally, the information will give local, state and federal officials the information to develop better building codes and land-use plans and helps architects and engineers design and construct structures that are more earthquake resistant.

Since the December 22 San Simeon Earthquake, OES has been coordinating California's support of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties in their response and recovery efforts.

At the request of San Luis Obispo County, OES has deployed 23 safety assessment personnel to assist local building officials in determining the safety of residential, commercial and government facilities for immediate occupancy. The 23 personnel deployed by OES include local building officials from outside the impacted area, as well as professional architects and engineers from the private sector who participate in OES's Safety Assessment Program.

On December 23, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed a State of Emergency in San Luis Obispo County. A State of Emergency in Santa Barbara County was proclaimed today. The proclamations enable affected local jurisdictions in the counties to seek state reimbursement of costs they incurred in the response to the earthquake and in the repair and restoration of public facilities.

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